Cracks in Rail Tracks

4708. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item which appeared on 22nd February, 2001 in the 'Indian Express' under the heading "Railways can't cover up cracks in its tracks";

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken by Government for improving financial position of the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The news-item was published on 22.02.2001 prior to the presentation of the Railway Budget for 2001-02 on 26.02.2001 and is, therefore, speculative to a large extent. Specific details of the various issues raised in the news-item as also the measures being taken to improve the financial position of the Railways have been spelt out in the Railway Budget documents for 2001-02, since presented to Parliament.

Public toilets near Rail Tracks

4709. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Railways plans clean up behind closed doors" as reported in the Statesman dated 7th March, 2001;

(b) if so, whether the Railways have started constructing public toilets in all the slum areas near rail tracks; and

(c) whether such a step is going to promote slums near rail tracks; if so, whether Government propose to re-examine the issue; if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Hon'ble High Court, Delhi have directed the Railways

and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi to provide toilets for use of unauthorised occupants of Railway land in some areas in Delhi. Railways have initiated necessary action in compliance of the Hon'ble Court's directives to maintain sanitation and hygienic conditions in such slums, till the affected areas are cleared of the unauthorised occupations. Railways are, however, vigilant to identify and remove fresh encroachments on their land, to prevent further growth of unauthorised occupations on their land.

Plan Allocation for Development of Railways

4710. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage variation in the plan allocations under major head of Railways' development in 2001-2002, as compared to 2000-2001;

(b) the reasons for not providing adequate funds under major development heads in 2001-2002;

(c) whether this would have adverse impact on Railways' development and ultimately on passengers and freight; and

(d) if not, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) The total budget allocation under major head Railway Development viz. Gauge Conversion, Doubling, New Lines, Railway Electrification and Traffic facilities in 2001-02 is Rs.2802 crores (Net) against revised outlay of Rs.2236 crores (Net) for 2000-01, constituting an increase of approximately 25% in outlay of 2001-02 vis-a-vis 2000-01. Thus adequate funds have been provided under development heads in 2001-02.

(c) and (d) No Sir, do not arise.